

WE CLAIM:

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1. A method of collating hyper-text documents, said method comprising the steps of:
 - (a) monitoring a user's access patterns to said hyper-text documents; and
 - (b) accessing said hyper-text documents including structure information of the accessed hyper-text documents;
 - (c) creating a formatted version of the accessed hyper-text documents for said user
2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein steps (a), (b) and (c) are conducted while the user accesses hyper-text documents.
3. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said formatted version of the accessed hyper-text document is updated upon new hyper-text pages being accessed.
4. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said steps are performed in background mode.
5. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein steps (b) and (c) are performed asynchronously with a user's access to said hyper-text documents.
6. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said steps are performed substantially in synchronism with a user's access to said hyper-text documents.
7. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said formatted version is formatted to be suitable for single or multiple column page printing on a printer output device.

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8. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said formatted version suitable for single or multiple column page printing comprises as many hyper-text documents on each printed page as can reasonably fit in a space available on said each printed page.

5 9. A method as claimed in claims 1, wherein said formatted version includes a table of contents listing each hyper-text document represented in said formatted version wherein each entry in the said table of contents is labelled with the position at which the associated hyper-text document occurs within the said formatted version.

10 10. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said formatted version includes a hyper-link index of all the hyper-link references in all the said hyper-text documents represented in said formatted version.

11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein each hyper-link reference in the said
16 formatted version is tagged with a cross-reference to its entry in said hyper-link index.

12. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said hyper-link index excludes hyper-link references of hyper-text documents represented in said formatted version.

20 13. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the said hyper-text documents are HTML documents.

14. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the said hyper-text documents are accessed using Internet protocols.

25 15. A method as claimed in claims 1, wherein said formatted version is displayed in preview form continuously while said user accesses said hyper-text documents.

16. A method of collating hyper-text documents, said method comprising steps of:

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- (a) accessing said hyper-text documents including structure information;
- (b) creating a formatted version of said accessed hyper-text documents wherein said formatted version is characterised by a single or multiple column printing such that each printed page contains as many of said hyper-text documents as can reasonably fit in an available space on a printed page.

17. A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said hyper text documents are determined by accepting a specification from a user of one or more root hyper-text documents and adding to said root hyper-text documents all derived hyper-text documents which are hyper-linked from said root hyper-text documents and have certain specified characteristics defined by said user.

18. A method as claimed in claims 16, wherein said formatted version includes a table of contents listing each hyper-text document represented in said formatted version wherein each entry in the said table of contents is labelled with the position at which the associated hyper-text document occurs within the said formatted version.

19. A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said formatted version includes a hyper-link index of all the hyper-link references in all the said hyper-text documents represented in said formatted version.

20. A method as claimed in claim 16 wherein each hyper-link reference in the said formatted version is tagged with a cross-reference to its entry in said hyper-link index.

21. A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said hyper-link index excludes hyper-link references of hyper-text documents represented in said formatted version.

22. A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the said hyper-text documents are HTML documents.

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23. A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the said hyper-text documents are accessed using Internet protocols.

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24. A method as claimed in claims 16, wherein said formatted version is displayed in preview form continuously while said user accesses said hyper-text documents.

25. Apparatus configured to implement the method of claim 1.

26. Apparatus configured to implement the method of claim 16.

27. A computer implemented method for collating a plurality of documents obtained from a plurality of sources, said method comprising the steps of:

monitoring accesses to documents in sequence;

15 recording the contents of a plurality of selected documents including structure information relating to each said selected document; and

collating said selected documents according to a predetermined order of collation, said collating comprising arranging none or more display pages according to the sizes of each said selected document based upon said corresponding structure information.

20 wherein said collating forms a single document reproducible at least by printing.

28. A computer system comprising:

a network comprising a source of a plurality of documents each individually accessible via a resource locator, wherein ones of said documents include therein links

25 that give access to others of said documents;

means for monitoring said resource locator and compiling a display list of said documents, said list including the corresponding links and structure information pertaining to each document; and

means for collating the display list into a selected order and for formatting said documents within said display list into a single printable document having corresponding components arranged in said selected order.

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30. A computer readable medium including instruction modules arranged to collate for printing as a single document a plurality of documents derived from a plurality of sources in a network, said modules comprising:

a monitoring module for monitoring browsing operations throughout said network;

10 a compiling module for compiling a display list of selected documents encountered during said browsing operations; and

a collating module for collating the selected documents into a single printable document in which each said selected document is formatted according to structure information derived during said monitoring module whereby said single printable
15 document is collated to be substantially seamless in printing reproduction and to minimize vacant or wasted space on any and each printed page.

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31. A medium as claimed in claim 30 wherein said medium is one of a computer network, a hard disk, a floppy disk and an optical disk.

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32. A computer program product having a computer readable medium having a computer program recorded thereon for collating hyper-text documents, said computer program product comprising:

means for monitoring a user's access patterns to said hyper-text documents;

25 means for accessing said hyper-text documents including structure information of the accessed hyper-text documents; and

means for creating a formatted version of the accessed hyper-text documents for said user.

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